

27 June 1980

MEMORANDUM

TO: Frank Carlucci
Deputy DCI

FROM:

RE: Harry Fitzwater's rebuttal to the IG Report on Recruiting

NOTE: This should be considered a postscript and extended commentary attached to my memo to you dated 20 June pertaining to the IG Report on the Recruiting System.

1. General comment. I have now had a chance to talk with Harry Fitzwater and some of his people, as well as reading Harry's "rebuttal" documents (hereinafter referred to simply as rebuttal) on the IG Report. I want to confine myself in this memo of 27 June to some of the issues that seem to be in contention between the IG on the one hand, and the Personnel people on the other. But, before I do that, let me offer a few general observations:

- (a) First, I like and admire Harry Fitzwater and his people very much. Harry is very dedicated, hardworking, and creative public servant in my judgment, and he has a lot of good people working for him.
- (b) Second, I also like and admire Chuck Briggs and his IG people, equally dedicated, hardworking and creative, a great asset to this organization.
- (c) But inspectors seem to have a built-in incentive to be critical, perhaps sometimes hyper-critical, although with the intent to be constructively critical--and inspectees seem to have a built-in tendency to resist criticisms and to offer rebuttals. In this case, the IG inspectors took the field and immediately went on the offensive, which then triggered the Personnel people to stack up in their best prevent defense.
- (d) The result of the tendencies noted immediately above was to create the appearance of a whole lot more distance between the IG and Personnel than in fact exists. Indeed, in my judgment, they are quite close together on maybe 95+% of the points under consideration.
- (e) I agree with the Personnel people that it was probably an unfortunate bit of timing for the IG inspection to occur so closely on the heels of Personnel's efforts to implement the recommendations out of the NAPA study and to implement other new procedures still in the process of coming on line. It would have been better if the dust could have settled on all that for another year or so before the IG people walked in to take a look. But, this is a relatively minor point and--after the early excitement--the IG Report should provide useful additional inputs and often strong reinforcement for what Personnel is already attempting.

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(f) Finally, let me add an important thought to a sentence at the end of my "GENERAL COMMENTS" on page 1 of my 20 June 1980 memo to you on this matter. At that point I said: "...it is possible that my laudatory reaction to this IG Report is at least in part because I see support for much of what I have been suggesting over three years." I certainly should have added the following thoughts. When I spent considerable time in the summer of 1978 (I think I have that time frame correctly in mind) talking to Fred Janney and other top people running Personnel then, I found them quite responsive to my suggestions but--more importantly--responsive to suggestions from the DCI and others who were concerned to improve all aspects of personnel management at the Agency. I came away from that experience (and reported as much in a memo to the DCI at that time) thinking that the Personnel Department was one of the more far-seeing units at the Agency, considerably more willing than most other units with which I was familiar to be self-critical and to accept constructive criticism from others, to be experimental in devising new approaches that might work better than old approaches, to be innovative as part of an awareness of a changing environment, and to stay on top of its game. My new look at this situation in the summer of 1980 reinforces all of those positive reactions of two years ago. I applaud virtually all of the specific initiatives itemized in Harry Fitzwater's rebuttal to the IG Report. His Personnel operation is doing a great many good and important things, they are neglecting to do very few things that I would regard as important, they are doing well what they are doing, and they have substantial valid evidence to support what they are doing. Like any good manager, he feels compelled to rise to the defense of his people if he believes they have been unjustly maligned. But, beyond this immediate reaction, I think he will see--at least, I think--that the IG Report should be interpreted far more in praise than in criticism of what Personnel is doing. It would probably be going a bit too far to describe this contretemps as a "tempest in a teapot," because there are a few issues that deserve to be joined, but even there I have to believe that people of good will can sit down and find common-ground compromises with far more promise than either of the extremes in the argument.

OK, with those general comments on the record, let me move on to some of the specifics where I might be able to insert a useful word or two.

2. Three big questions on recruiting. There are three major issues that I think should be the dominant center of attention in reviewing these matters: (a) the "sluggishness" argument pertaining to the time required to locate, evaluate and hire recruits; (b) the quantity of recruits to be considered; (c) the quality of people hired. I would offer a few words on each of these three, as reflected in the IG Report and the Fitzwater rebuttal.

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- (a) On "sluggishness" in the time required to locate, evaluate and hire recruits, Fitzwater should have been grateful to the IG Report for raising the issue, because it gave Harry a chance to publicize the major achievements he has already recorded in this area, the new steps underway to improve the situation even further, and the ultimate goals toward which Personnel's efforts are oriented. DCI Stan Turner was rightly concerned about this problem back in 1977-78, and he worried whether Personnel was "getting his message." But I think that Personnel not only got the message, those people were vigorous and imaginative in coming up with new ways to address the problem--and now it seems to me that dramatic progress has been achieved, with more progress to come when further steps are fully operational. The IG Report would have been negligent if it had not jabbed yet another needle in Personnel's side on this point, but the fact is that Personnel has already needled itself pretty effectively in this area, with some early jabbing from the DCI. On balance, I find it hard to imagine what more Personnel might have done in this area, on any reasonable timetable. In summary on this point, the Fitzwater rebuttal wins, IG loses.
- (b) On the quantity of recruits to be considered, again I would have to cast my vote with the Fitzwater rebuttal. As Harry says, quantity really isn't the problem.
- (c) On the quality of recruits hired (from the quantity recruited), this is the ultimate bottom line, and on this point I was less than fully satisfied with either the IG Report or the Fitzwater rebuttal. The IG Report occasionally danced around the May Pole on this, but gave it relatively little focused attention, unless I missed something in the report. And Harry therefore did not feel compelled to address it squarely, given the other items in the report that seized his attention.

Quality is admittedly the most elusive issue. It's extremely difficult to judge the quality of anything--it's ordinarily a quite subjective process, even when evidence with the superficial appearance of "hard data" is introduced. Finally, the qualitative judgment is particularly difficult when the thing being judged is a human being. If this weren't the case, we would not have the "Peter Principle," we probably would not need the judicial branch, we might not even need government. Aside from a few Biblical injunctions "to judge not, that ye not be judged" (which is baloney), we could probably get almost 100% consensus that all organizations must have procedures for qualitative evaluations. Professors and students over the past decade who thought that the so-called "pass-fail" system would eliminate many of the allegedly invidious implications of alpha-numeric grades were guilty of great self-deception, as most have subsequently discovered. The simple fact is that everybody is grading everybody, and in turn is being graded by everybody, at all points in life. It may not always be necessary or appropriate, but it is always happening.

The immutable bottom line provides a powerful discipline in grading performance in the business and banking fields. But in all not-for-profit organizations (and this includes all government agencies--although I have some doubts whether it is ever entirely accurate to describe any organization as "not for profit"), things get substantially murkier.

So, what can the Agency do to improve qualitative evaluations as these pertain to recruiting? Some obvious thoughts:

- There can be more correlation studies between evaluations at recruiting/hiring time and at later points during careers for those hired. There are a lot of problems with this kind of effort--for only one problem, people gradually find themselves moving into new kinds of work later in a career quite different from what they were initially hired to do. The Tests and Measurements people in Personnel tell me that they have done a few correlations studies such as I am suggesting, and would like to do more if they were authorized to hire two or three people for this kind of ongoing research.
- Don't get complacent about "performance rating" instruments and systems. The phenomenon of "grade inflation" is a widespread problem in academic life, in the military, and everywhere in government. It's a problem that grows out of good instincts, given our tightly complex society which restrains job mobility across career tracks, meaning that to flunk a person out of one career can well mean flunking the person out of any career--and there goes life itself. Still, without discipline in this matter, the Peter Principle will become the dominant law of the land, and there goes the nation.
- Do more comparative studies between personnel evaluation systems here, and systems elsewhere both in the private and public sectors. One ancient issue is whether performance is more a function of personal qualities presumably pretty much intact when a person is hired, or whatever an organization then does to immerse the person in the tribal rites and rituals of the organization (a process known in the academic literature as "professional socialization" or--in Orville Brims's more accurate phrasing--"through-lifecycle socialization"). Another problem with "performance rating" instruments and systems is that they often reveal nothing more than the extent to which an individual has fully accommodated him/herself to the conventional wisdom and tribal customs of his/her organization. Comparative studies might help to uncover some of these typical tendencies, to the extent that they exist at the Agency.
- Don't get swallowed up in a "defensive" attitude. Any organization not willing to step back at anytime and take a hard objective look at its qualitative evaluation systems is living in a fool's paradise.

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- Whatever performance system you use, and however much you may experience the "grade inflation" problem, there will be a list ranging from top to bottom. Fire the bottom 15% to 20% every year. You may make a few mistakes, but not as many as you would make if you kept them, and you will keep the well fresh. Holy smokes, I wish we could do this in academic life, but damned few professors are sufficiently secure in their self-evaluations to want to risk abandoning the tenure system, and that system keeps us loaded up with excess dead wood all the time.
- Improve your system of career counselling, so that people get valid signals at frequent points as to how they are doing. The U.S. armed services are excellent at this (even if they often use questionable criteria), whereas the State Department is terrible. How is the CIA? Not better than average, I would guess.

3. "Passivity" in recruiting. Harry Fitzwater thinks he got a bum rap in the IG Report, charging Personnel with relying excessively on "passive" recruiting measures. Maybe. On balance, I guess I side mainly with Harry on this. But, given Harry's admission that "the primary recruitment attention is aimed at the university population," I think a lot more could be done here. I have been in the academic business for about a quarter of a century, and it's not exactly a secret among my colleagues or even my students that I am not hostile to the CIA. Yet, no CIA recruiter over 25 years has ever visited me, to ask if I could be helpful in identifying potential recruits. In fact, I have tried to do this anyway, but it was not because an Agency recruiter ever asked me to do so, or cultivated or contacted me in any fashion. I have been fairly regularly contacted by other kinds of CIA representatives, but not in connection with personnel recruiting. This same story is true for many of my friends on many other campuses who are prominent professors and who--one could easily infer from available evidence--would not be unreceptive to encouraging good students to think about the Agency as a career option. At the University of [redacted] where I have been located for the past decade, a CIA personnel recruiter does routinely visit the University Placements Office about every year, but that person has never called on me, and I think it's largely the same elsewhere. Harry may have evidence to prove me wrong, but it still strikes me as strange that a CIA personnel recruiter has never darkened my door.

So, "passivity" may not be the right word, but there is some problem here when the one most appropriate talent pool (i.e., the "university population" in Harry's term) is not systematically reached via contact with those professors on good campuses who could be expected to be reasonably friendly toward Agency personnel recruiters.

This gets at another key theme in the IG Report that Harry Fitzwater resists, and this is the proposal to move line managers far more actively into the recruiting effort. Yet, it seems to me that Harry

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may have eased the rug out from under his own feet when it was said, at the bottom of page 8 of Attachment B of the Fitzwater rebuttal, that it is certainly good to get potential recruits together with the Agency people with whom they might be working as soon as possible. Well, as soon as possible would be the initial recruiting contacts, and yet this is where Harry boggles.

If, as Harry says and I believe, the university population is the most important recruiting target area, and if, as Harry says and I believe, it's important to get prospective hires together with their prospective Agency colleagues as soon as possible, then those Agency colleagues from the line units must be involved in recruiting at the outset. If you send one of your top engineers to talk to the top engineering deans and professors on my campus or any campus, I think you are likely to hire far more good engineers than to send a recruiter (with no other Agency experience) to a campus placements office and then expect the placements people to get the good engineers for you. It just does not happen that way. The one most important influence on a student's career decisions, in my judgment, is that set of professors with whom he/she has most closely worked. So, you have to get to the professors, and you have to do it with people who are in the same professional fields as those professors.

Finally, it would help even more if the professional line people who become engaged in recruiting were also alumni of the campuses they would visit, or at least came from the same town or area. This "protective coloration" can be invaluable, and it gets back to my recommendation in my 20 June memo to you on the point of using more Agency "alumni" retirees in your recruiting efforts. As a further variation on this theme, if you can't send an engineer (for example) to talk to the engineers at X University, then send a graduate of X University even if that graduate was not an engineer. You will be missing a major bet if you don't play off of the "old school tie" connection.

And then, as another point that I can insert here as well as anywhere, there is a far better way to do campus recruiting than simply the conventional sending of a recruiter. The best recruiting is the recruiting that does not look like recruiting. After you have identified your key faculty friends on prime campuses around the nation, get Jim or somebody to work with you in trying to offer top Agency professionals as guest speakers on those campuses. The first thing that this for you is to allow you to showcase your best people at their best, doing their professional thing. But, after the guest lecture, little receptions can be arranged, creating a natural opportunity for students to come up and ask questions informally. At least a few of those students will typically express an interest in the Agency, and the Agency professional can then pass out calling cards, saying, "Look, keep in touch, write to me, or drop by for a visit when you are in Washington--but call me first to make sure I am in town." I have had at least half a dozen top Agency people as guests on my campus in recent years (Stan Turner, Scott Breckinridge, Don Gregg,

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Helene Boatner, [redacted] and others), and these people have generated substantial new respect for the Agency--and interest in working for it--among my best students.

4. Minority recruiting. The IG Report is concerned about this, but Harry Fitzwater thinks he has a very good handle on it--and that his procedures are locating and getting a good number of good blacks. Harry may be right--he has some impressive evidence.

But I would stress that nobody anywhere, to my knowledge, has demonstrated that using black recruiters is a more effective way to hire more good blacks than using non-blacks to recruit blacks. I have participated in several efforts along these lines over the years:

- In the early 1960s, Professor Vincent Brown of Howard University (a black) was asked by the Ford Foundation to accept a grant to work with the State Department in an effort to attract more blacks into the Foreign Service. Brown had me working for him on this project at one time. The project was largely a failure. In short, a noted black scholar could not succeed in helping to attract more good black students into FSO careers.
- Three years ago, about 1976-66, I asked a close friend of mine, Professor C. Eric Lincoln, to help me recruit more black students for my graduate school. Eric is one of the two or three most distinguished black professors in American academic life--the founding president of the Academy of Black Scholars and Scientists, author of the first and best scholarly book on the Black Muslim movement in the U.S., author of dozens of others books and articles, formerly a professor at Atlanta University and Brown University and Union Theological Seminary and Fisk University (now at Duke University), close longtime friend of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X and Andy Young and most other notable black leaders. Eric made two trips with me, carefully planned in advance. The first was to the Atlanta University complex (actually a federation of five black schools), where he was once executive assistant to the president, and to Howard and Morgan State in the Washington area. We attracted zero students from those exercises, with Eric running all of my interference, and actually being with me for appearances on those campuses.

I have in fact had a number of outstanding black students. One of them is now the top authority anywhere on the Law of the Sea. Another is now the U.S. Ambassador to Kenya. BUT MY POINT is that none of these students came to me for any particular reason that would warrant generalizations about recruiting black students.

My own feeling is that the main point to get across is that black students are welcome, that they will be given absolutely equal treatment with everybody else, and that their career options are as open (if not more open) than anybody else's. But conveying this

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message does not necessarily require or even suggest the advisability of using black recruiters. IF you want to use black recruiters, again I would say they ought to be blacks drawn from your main line units at the Agency, to illustrate the point that bright blacks are having successful careers in this organization. This point is far more significant than sending around a black who is merely a recruiter, and the black who is merely a recruiter cannot make this point effectively--any more than a white recruiter could. You need to SHOW blacks that you have outstanding blacks in important positions of authority and responsibility here. This might help.

But, again, if anybody has a magic all-purpose answer that is guaranteed to attract more blacks, I have not heard that answer.

I object to the notion of lumping women with blacks as a minority group. My experience tells me that the way to recruit more good women is not necessarily the way that you would try to recruit more good blacks. I won't elaborate on this here, because I do not really see the hiring of more women at the Agency as a significant problem for the Agency--this may also be true for blacks. Whatever Personnel is doing, I think it's working pretty well for both blacks and women.

5. Right of appeal to ARP decisions. Harry Fitzwater's rebuttal takes strong exception to Recommendation 25 in the IG Report. What I object to is the very notion of "appeals." This puts the whole matter into the context of adversary proceedings, as in a court. Harry has some good arguments on his side, but surely it ought to be possible in many cases for Personnel to convey something back to the line managers when ARP rejects a candidate, and for the line managers to discuss it in a friendly fashion with the Personnel people.

Turfing wars are one of the most troublesome things that I see at the Agency, in many contexts. The Agency has enough enemies on the outside, without choosing up sides for fights inside. It baffles me why more people in this Agency do not talk in a friendly fashion across the existing barriers, in the conviction that this operation can never work as it ought to work in the absence of a unifying sense of common cause. Whoever has failed at high management levels to instill this sense of cooperative friendly contacts internally has contributed to a major problem within this organization. I am sure that segmentation in security clearances contributes to the problem to some extent, but it's by no means all of it. As long as people inside the organization insist on waging little guerrilla wars against each other, the Agency will remain a very attractive target for outsiders to shoot at. This certainly does not imply walking off into the horizon in lockstep conformity, but it does mean sitting down very frequently in many informal settings to discuss differences with an overriding sense of shared purposes and professional friendliness.

6. PATB. The uproar over the recommendations on PATB in the IG Report provide a great example of the tendency toward guerrilla warfare here. I have talked to the two gentlemen here who have the most to do with PATB, and they are splendid fellows with a great deal of professional competence and common sense. But their sense of paranoia toward line managers is excessive. Examples:

- They point out that IG Reports on Recruiting in 1959 and again in 1968 gave rave reviews to PATB. Therefore, they ask, why do we get a rap in the IG Report of 1980? This strikes me as a silly question. The year 1980 is very different from 1959 or even 1968, when the domestic and international environments were far more apparently stable and tranquil, when we had a quite different kind of young person growing up in the U.S., and when the Agency itself was not under the cloud that it found overhead in the 1970s.
- They say that the IG went out and hired a couple of narrow-minded superannuated consultants to comment on PATB, so they went out and hired their own consultants. Who did they get? A guy named [] who invented PATB when he worked for the Agency, and who surely was not going to come in and agree that anything was wrong with it--who kills his baby?--and, furthermore, [] is about as elderly as the consultants used by the IG. Another guy named [] who invented the [] used in PATB, who has been a frequent consultant over the years to the PATB people--again, who kills his own baby? And one other guy named [] certainly a good man, but also a frequent consultant to the PATB folks. In short, the consultants brought in as their rebuttal witnesses by the PATB people here are about as objective and neutral as Jimmy Carter on Burt Lance.
- They say that they can't give raw scores to line managers because line managers have always "abused" raw scores when they had access to them in the past. This may be true but, if it is true, then the PATB people need to do a lot more teaching when dealing with the line managers, so that the line managers have some understanding of the process. It's true that raw scores in and of themselves are almost useful, but line managers need to learn this, and why. Furthermore, line managers from their side need to be far more forthcoming in giving the PATB and other Personnel Department leaders good job descriptions and other feedback on performance, etc. The PATB fellows told me they can ordinarily get this kind of information, but only if they go to the line managers and beg for it. For the sake of the Agency and all of us, why can't the PATB people and the line managers sit down as friends and come to better mutual understandings? As it is, the PATB people are suspicious and more than a little hostile toward line managers as a category, convinced that only trained psychologists who specialize in this sort of work can do it well, while the line managers are apparently in some

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doubt as to whether the PATB people ought to play such a heavy role in describing what a candidate is all about.

As in my 20 June memo to you, I remain persuaded that PATB merits heavy scrutiny. It has been the dominant instrument around here for about 25 years, of course with occasional revisions and modifications. The PATB people use the 25 years as an argument for sticking with a horse that has been successful. From my perspective, I would raise questions about almost any 25-year-old horse even without looking at it.

Another problem, and here the PATB people have much merit on their side, is the point that the PATB is not one test but a whole series of different tests and procedures. OK. But I would favor intense scrutiny of the whole package, in a joint effort between the PATB people, the IG people, the line managers, and a new team of outside consultants not including any of those thus far used (and ideally excluding anybody with any conceivable vested interest in the outcome, but people whose professional credentials are beyond question).

In summary, this suggests that the PATB issue is too complicated to be resolved now, on the basis of the perhaps superficial commentary in the IG Report, or the stridently shrill rebuttal from the PATB people. A comprehensive new effort is needed, getting all of the parties in the conflict represented around a table for a protracted series of meetings. There should be no particular time pressure here. Take your time, and do it right. The PATB people are correct on many particulars, but I think the IG people are right in the broader perspectives--it's time to take a good hard look at what PATB is all about, and not whether it has worked OK in the past but whether we can do it better in the future.

* * * * *

In conclusion, the IG Report should be viewed as a good beginning in the matter of raising relevant questions about recruiting and related personnel issues. The Fitzwater rebuttal is a good start in this direction, on top of the IG Report. Now, if people of good will can sit down together in a quiet and friendly fashion to discuss only those relatively few things about which there is some significant disagreement, I see good common-ground solutions... not compromises just for the sake of compromise, but because middle solutions hold a lot of promise whereas standfast reactions at one extreme and revolutionary change at the other extreme are simply not called for in this circumstance.

Very respectfully,



P.S. Please pardon all typos, spelling errors, other errors, etc. Typed at breakneck speed on my last day on board, and not proofread.

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